



U.S. Immigration
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Enforcement

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News Release

BUFFALO AREA MAN SENTENCED IN CHILD PORN CASE

Cooperative investigation with German police leads to ICE arrest, guilty plea

BUFFALO, N.Y. – The owner of a New York landscaping business has been sentenced to 37 months in federal prison after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents discovered child pornography on his computer.

Robert Pintabona of Alden, N.Y., pleaded guilty to federal child pornography charges in January after he downloaded pornography from a German Web site that, unbeknownst to him, was part of an undercover operation of the German National Police.

Pintabona was sentenced April 14, 2005 in United States District Court in Buffalo.

The ICE investigation into Pintabona's activities uncovered images and movies of children involved in sexually explicit conduct stored on his computer. Some of the images were of children less than 12 years old, and one showed a child involved in sadistic and masochistic conduct. This is not the first time that Pintabona has violated laws intended to protect children: In 2004 he was convicted in Erie County Court for endangering the welfare of a child.

"The case is an excellent example of international cooperation between police agencies to put people who exploit children behind bars," Peter Smith, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge for Buffalo. "Thanks to the German National Police undercover operation, Robert Pintabona will spend time in prison instead of receiving and sharing sexual images of children."

Pintabona's arrest was part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including Internet child pornographers, child sex tourists, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE has arrested more than 5,319 individuals, including 11 in the Buffalo area.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.